

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A shipping management computer system, said computer system programmed to:

determine from a set of delivery times for each of a plurality of services for each of a plurality of carriers a potential delivery schedule for each of the plurality of services for each of the plurality of carriers in response to a request by each of a plurality of users to ship a particular parcel, wherein each user accesses the shipping management computer system over a global communications network using a client computer device, and wherein each user client computer device has an individual electronic connection to the global communications network.

2. The shipping management computer system of Claim 1, said computer system further programmed to:

calculate for each of the plurality of users upon each request by each user a shipping rate for each of the plurality of services offered by each of a plurality of carriers for delivering the particular parcel according to the determined potential delivery schedule for the particular service for the particular carrier.

3. The shipping management computer system of Claim 2, said computer system further programmed to:

generate, in response to a user request for a shipping rate and delivery time comparison, a display of an online interactive prompt to a display monitor configured with a user client computer device of the particular user, said online interactive prompt comprising a comparison of shipping rates for a plurality of services offered by a plurality of carriers for delivering the particular parcel according to the determined potential delivery schedule for the particular service for the particular carrier.

4. A method using a computer system for managing shipping of a plurality of

1 parcels shipped by any one of a plurality of carriers, the method comprising:

2 determining from a set of delivery times for each of a plurality of services for each of  
3 a plurality of carriers a potential delivery schedule for each of the plurality of services for  
4 each of the plurality of carriers in response to a request by each of a plurality of users to ship  
5 a particular parcel, wherein each user accesses the shipping management computer system  
6 over a global communications network using a client computer device, and wherein each user  
7 client computer device has an individual electronic connection to the global communications  
8 network.

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10 5. The method of Claim 4, said method further comprising:

11 calculating for each of the plurality of users upon each request by each user a  
12 shipping rate for each of the plurality of services offered by each of a plurality of carriers for  
13 delivering the particular parcel according to the determined potential delivery schedule for  
14 the particular service for the particular carrier.

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16 6. The method of Claim 5, said method further comprising:

17 generating, in response to a user request for a shipping rate and delivery time  
18 comparison, a display of an online interactive prompt to a display monitor configured with a  
19 user client computer device of the particular user, said online interactive prompt comprising a  
20 comparison of shipping rates for a plurality of services offered by a plurality of carriers for  
21 delivering the particular parcel according to the determined potential delivery schedule for  
22 the particular service for the particular carrier.

23  
24 7. A computer program product embodying computer program instructions for  
25 execution by a computer system for managing shipping of a plurality of parcels shipped by  
26 any one of a plurality of carriers, the computer program product comprising:

27 a set of program instructions for determining from a set of delivery times for each of a  
28 plurality of services for each of a plurality of carriers a potential delivery schedule for each of  
29 the plurality of services for each of the plurality of carriers in response to a request by each of

1 a plurality of users to ship a particular parcel, wherein each user accesses the shipping  
2 management computer system over a global communications network using a client  
3 computer device, and wherein each user client computer device has an individual electronic  
4 connection to the global communications network.

5  
6 8. The computer program product of Claim 7, said computer program product  
7 further comprising:

8 a set of program instructions for calculating for each of the plurality of users upon  
9 each request by each user a shipping rate for each of the plurality of services offered by each  
10 of a plurality of carriers for delivering the particular parcel according to the determined  
11 potential delivery schedule for the particular service for the particular carrier.

12  
13 9. The computer program product of Claim 8, said computer program product  
14 further comprising:

15 a set of program instructions for generating, in response to a user request for a  
16 shipping rate and delivery time comparison, a display of an online interactive prompt to a  
17 display monitor configured with a user client computer device of the particular user, said  
18 online interactive prompt comprising a comparison of shipping rates for a plurality of  
19 services offered by a plurality of carriers for delivering the particular parcel according to the  
20 determined potential delivery schedule for the particular service for the particular carrier.